



National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
Connecticut Chapter  
659 Tower Avenue, First Floor  
Hartford, CT 06112-1269  
tel +1.860.913.2550  
fax +1.860.761.2466  
[www.ctfightsmis.org](http://www.ctfightsmis.org)

**The Appropriations Committee  
Public Hearing - February 11, 2010  
Testimony on the State Budget for the Department of Social Services**

Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian and Distinguished Members of the Appropriations Committee and the Human Services Subcommittee,

My name is Susan Raimondo and I am the Senior Director of Advocacy and Programs for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Connecticut Chapter. I am also the family care giver representative to the CT Long Term Care Advisory Council and I serve on the Money Follows the Person Steering Committee. I have been involved in advocacy, providing services and in policy development assisting elders and persons with disabilities for over 25 years in our state.

First, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Connecticut Chapter would like to thank the Legislature and Governor Rell for funding for the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Disabled .. This program is the only option for these younger individuals who are living with degenerative neurological diseases and who are at high risk of institutionalization. We are asking that funding for this essential program be preserved.

The Connecticut Home Care Program for the Disabled (CHCPD) is a pilot program that was developed to provide home-based services to people age 18–64 with degenerative neurological conditions who are at risk of being institutionalized in nursing homes. Currently, the program is serving 41 individuals throughout the state including those with multiple sclerosis, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and Huntington's. The program has 49 people on the waiting list. These individuals are not eligible for other programs.

The pilot program, administered by the Connecticut Department of Social Services' Alternate Care Unit, provides services which may include care management, adult day health programs, chore assistance, companions, home health care, home delivered meals, homemaker services, assisted living services and personal care attendants.

Tonight you will hear from individuals living with MS who use the program. If this program is eliminated, the 41 individuals currently on the program will lose their home care and have to be inappropriately institutionalized. We know that the program is saving

Over...

the state money.

- The average monthly cost of home care for individuals on the program is \$1,433 compared to a cost of \$5,680 if the individual were to be on Medicaid and living in a nursing home.

**SAVINGS: \$4,247 per person per month**

- Home care for the 41 people on the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Disabled

**SAVES: \$2,089,524 each year**

The proposed cuts in health care services to Connecticut's most vulnerable individuals are very distressing. Individuals with multiple sclerosis will be impacted at all levels of the cuts. We realize the horrific economic crisis that Connecticut is facing, but please remember the faces and stories of how this program significantly improves lives and saves money.

Please continue to fund the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Disabled.

Thank you for your support and services.